

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada

March 14, 2002

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of Canada, a personal friend and a great friend of America, back to the White House. We had a wide-ranging discussion on a lot of topics, starting with how appreciative I am of his steadfast support and the Canadian Government's steadfast support and the Canadian people's steadfast support in our war against terror. We know the Canadians have put troops on the ground in Afghanistan, and they have performed brilliantly. For that, we are grateful.

We also talked about our border. We've got a great relationship on our border. We've had a series of meaningful discussions on putting reforms in place. I believe our border cooperation is going to be the model for not only our hemisphere but also for the world.

We also talked about trade issues. Canada is a massive trading partner with the United States, and it's an important trading partner of the United States. And like any relationship that has got a lot of issues, sometimes we run into rough spots. And one such issue is softwood lumber. But our negotiators, as a result of the Prime Minister's assistance and my assistance, are working overtime to achieve an agreement by March the 21st. We're making very good progress. And we've agreed to keep working hard to achieve an agreement that is satisfactory to both parties, and I believe we can achieve that.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for coming.

Oh, by the way, we talked energy. It's important for the American people to know that as a result of our trade agreements with Canada and our close relations, Canada is a significant supplier of energy to the United States. And that's positive. It's much better for us to be securing our en-

ergy from a friend and a stable friend and a partner.

And so I appreciate the Canadian energy business. I appreciate the exploration that's going on. It is good for our economy. I shared with the Prime Minister—I'm optimistic about our economy. We've still got some rough spots, but it looks like we may be improving. And if we are, that will be good news for both of us.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome back. It is my honor to serve you dinner again, and it's a thrill to be with you.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you, Mr. President. I cannot add to what the President said. He covered the ground very well. I think the relations between America and Canada could not be better. We are solving problems when we have one. We are working with America in the war against terrorism. Our troops are in the fight at this moment in Afghanistan. You know, in the snow, we're good at it, President, you know. And we—

President Bush. You're good on the ice, too. [Laughter]

Prime Minister Chretien. We are good on the ice, too—and both men and women. [Laughter] And so—and we have to work on our other problems. Thank you for the statement you made on softwood lumber. I think that the defense of our values and against terrorism are extremely important for Canadians. And we have worked very well together.

For me, I should say a few words in French, with your permission.

President Bush. Please.

Prime Minister Chretien. Can you translate after that? [Laughter]

[At this point, Prime Minister Chretien spoke in French and then resumed speaking in English.]

I want to tell you that we spoke about Africa, and I want to say—I said that in French—I want to say thank you for what you have announced today, about the programs that you have announced, because as you know, at Kananaskis in Canada, at the G-8, the main topic will be Africa. And we want to establish a partnership with them. They came to Genoa last June; you and our colleagues asked me to take—[in-audible]—at that time. And I think that the partnership, and with your contribution, is developing very well.

Next month I will be traveling in Africa for—visiting five or six countries to build a partnership but to reward good governance, human rights, to make sure that they have real democracies and so on. And those who don't do that will have to—not to be rewarded, because they will not meet what the world wants.

So thank you again, Mr. President.

For the press, I will take questions after my dinner. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:10 p.m. in the Colonnade at the White House.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2003

March 14, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests for FY 2003 budget amendments for the Departments of Commerce, Defense, Labor, Transportation, and the Treasury; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2003 Budget would not be increased by these requests. However, the total budgetary resources available to the Department of Transportation would increase by \$596 million.

This transmittal also contains FY 2003 budget amendments for the Legislative Branch. As a matter of comity, appropriations requests of the Legislative Branch are

transmitted without change. These additional amendments would increase discretionary resources for the Legislative Branch by \$40.4 million.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 15. An original was not available for the verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks in Fayetteville, North Carolina

March 15, 2002

The President. Thank you all.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Thank you all very much.

At ease! [Laughter] General McNeill, thank you very much. For a warrior, you're pretty